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William S Van Allen 04/15/2002 11:04:12 AM From DB/Inbox: William S Van Allen

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TELEGRAM

April 10, 2002

To: AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN - PRIORITY
Origin: WHA
From: SECSTATE WASHDC (STATE 68750 - PRIORITY)
TAGS: OPRC, KPAO
Captions: None
Subject: WHA GUIDANCE, APRIL 10, 2002
Ref: None

Summary of Contents:

1. WHA Press Guidance, April 10 (Mexico, Venezuela)
 2. L Press Guidance, April 10 (Colombia)
- End Summary.

- 1. WHA Press Guidance, April 10, 2002:

-- MEXICO: MEXICAN SENATE VOTE TO DISALLOW FOX VISIT TO THE U.S. --

Key points to make:

WE ALWAYS WELCOME TRAVEL TO THE U.S. BY PRESIDENT FOX.
THE SENATE'S VOTE ON HIS PROPOSED TRIP TO CANADA AND THE U.S.
IS AN INTERNAL MATTER FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO.

Question: Can you comment on yesterday's vote by the Mexican Senate to disallow President Fox's upcoming visit to the U.S. and Canada?

Answer: THIS IS A MATTER INTERNAL TO MEXICO, TO BE RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE BRANCHES.

PRESIDENT FOX IS ALWAYS WELCOME IN THE UNITED STATES.

-- VENEZUELA: REACTION TO GENERAL STRIKE --

Q: Do you have any reaction to the general strike in Venezuela?

A: WE LOOK TO ALL PARTIES TO ENGAGE IN GENUINE DIALOGUE TO PEACEFULLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES. ADDITIONALLY, WE HOPE THAT BOTH THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION DEMONSTRATE RESTRAINT AS THE VENEZUELAN CONFEDERATION OF WORKERS (CTV) AND THE FEDERATION OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE (FEDECAMARAS) EXERCISE THEIR RIGHT TO EXPRESS THEIR OPINION. SUPPORTERS OF THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT ENJOY THE SAME RIGHTS TO EXPRESS THEIR OPINION PEACEFULLY. THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT, AS SIGNATORY OF THE 1947 UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC CHARTER, SIGNED ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, HAS A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO OBSERVE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS.

ALL PARTIES SHOULD ABIDE BY THE VENEZUELAN CONSTITUTION AND LAWS TO FIND A PEACEFUL AND DEMOCRATIC CHANNEL TO ADVANCE DIALOGUE, LOWER TENSIONS, RESOLVE THE ISSUE LEADING TO THE STRIKE IN THE STATE OIL COMPANY (PDVSA), AND SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES. WE REJECT VIOLENCE BY ANY PARTY OR ANY ATTEMPT TO UNDERMINE DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN L MILLS
DATE/CASE ID: 27 APR 2006 200304421

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(If Asked)

Q: Do you have any comment on the statement by the Organization of American States Special Rapporteur's statement concerning press freedoms in Venezuela?

A: WE DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE APRIL 8 STATEMENT OF CONCERN BY THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS) SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON PRESS FREEDOMS THAT THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT'S ABUSE OF ITS PRIVILEGE TO BROADCAST ITS STATEMENTS CONSTITUTED AN ABRIDGEMENT OF THE MEDIA'S FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR'S STATEMENT REFLECTS THE CONCERNS OF OAS MEMBER STATES.

-- VENEZUELA: DISRUPTION OF OIL SUPPLIES --

Q: Is the general strike in Venezuela raising concerns about a disruption in oil supplies to the U.S. from Venezuela?
A: WE ARE WATCHING THE GENERAL STRIKE IN VENEZUELA, WHICH IS ENTERING ITS SECOND DAY, VERY CLOSELY. THE OPERATIONS OF THE VENEZUELAN STATE OIL COMPANY (PDVSA) HAVE BEEN SLOWED DOWN, BUT AS OF YET, WE DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO ASSESS THE EFFECT THIS STRIKE MAY HAVE ON VENEZUELA'S OIL EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES AND ARE SEEKING FURTHER DETAILS. VENEZUELAN OIL SHIPMENTS USUALLY TAKE SEVERAL DAYS TO REACH THE U.S., AND VENEZUELAN OIL INVENTORIES ARE BELIEVED TO BE AMPLE. THE POTENTIAL LONGER-TERM IMPACT OF THIS STRIKE DEPENDS ON MANY FACTORS, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION CLOSELY.

2. L Press Guidance, April 10, 2002

-- Colombia Extradition: Victor Patino-Fomeque --

Q: Will we seek the extradition of Victor Patino-Fomeque?

A: COLOMBIAN CITIZEN VICTOR PATINO-FOMEQUE WAS ARRESTED BY COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES ON APRIL 9, 2002. HIS ARREST WAS MADE PURSUANT TO A U.S. REQUEST FOR PROVISIONAL ARREST FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXTRADITION. PATINO IS AN ALLEGED MEMBER OF A CRIMINAL DRUG TRAFFICKING RING BASED IN CALI.

HE IS WANTED TO STAND TRIAL IN THE U.S. DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA FOR CONSPIRACY TO IMPORT NARCOTICS AND RELATED MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES.

THE UNITED STATES NOW HAS 60 DAYS TO SUBMIT A FORMAL EXTRADITION REQUEST, ALONG WITH THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS. THE MATTER THEN GOES TO THE COLOMBIAN COURTS FOR A DETERMINATION ON WHETHER THE FUGITIVE IS EXTRADITABLE.

THIS ARREST IS A RESULT OF CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN U.S. AND COLOMBIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES. SINCE 1998, COLOMBIA HAS EXTRADITED A TOTAL OF 47 FUGITIVES TO THE UNITED STATES, MOST OF WHOM WERE WANTED ON NARCOTICS AND RELATED CHARGES. IN THE PAST YEAR, NOTED COLOMBIAN DRUG KINGPINS FABIO OCHOA AND ALEJANDRO BERNAL WERE AMONG THOSE EXTRADITED.

WE CAN NOW TALK ABOUT THE ARREST BECAUSE IT HAS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE AND THE INDICTMENT HAS BEEN UNSEALED.

FURTHER QUESTIONS SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.
POWELL

Additional Addressees:
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